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SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ECUADOR TO SUPPORT CUBAN UNGA RESOLUTION

REF: SECSTATE 215870

¶1. (U) In response to Reftel, the Embassy October 7 delivered pro-embargo, anti-resolution talking points to the Ecuadorian foreign ministry. In a follow-up meeting October 14 with MFA Director General for Multilateral Policy Miguel Mendes, Poloff emphasized three points: the U.S. embargo was a bilateral matter not relevant for multilateral discussion, it was but one tool the USG was utilizing to foment democratic opposition and a peaceful transition in Cuba, and the international community should focus instead on Castro's documented human rights abuses.

¶2. (U) Mendes claimed to have visited Cuba recently and there saw great suffering. Not only Castro's lackeys, but the rank-and-file too, blamed the embargo for their deplorable living standards. Mendes erroneously believed the U.S. measure prevented foreign-based multinational corporations from doing business in Cuba, and called for its lifting on humanitarian grounds. The GoE deplored Castro's imprisonment of dissidents and other draconian policies, however, and would continue to push for glasnost on the island.

¶3. (SBU) COMMENT: Pressed, Mendes admitted Ecuador would follow its long-standing policy of supporting Cuba's anti-embargo UNGA vote. His professed concern over GoC human rights abuses was disingenuous, unfortunately, as Castro remains a beloved figure in Ecuador, especially amongst its left-leaning diplomats.

KENNEY